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# State of Utah

## DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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Media Advisory

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## Prescribed Burn Planned for Ogden Bay Wildlife Management Area

The Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands, in coordination with the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, is planning a significant prescribed fire tomorrow, May 26, 2010. This burn is the third prescribed fire to take place on the Ogden Bay Wildlife Management Area (OBWMA) this spring. Crews plan to ignite the first portions of the 500-acre target as early as 9 a.m.

The prescribed burn is aimed at abating the invasive Phragmites reed currently choking thousands of acres of wetlands on the management area. The objective of the operation is to create a more hospitable habitat for waterfowl and a more accessible setting for people visiting the area. Over the last two years, herbicide has been aerially sprayed over portions of the target area. The fire will consume the stands of dead Phragmites enabling the restoration of native wetland plants in the reclaimed areas. Native species like cattail, saltgrass and duckweed are less dense, providing a more hospitable habitat for waterfowl.

### Smoke and Air Quality

The fire's progress will be monitored and limited to manage size and smoke production. The Utah Division of Air Quality requires that a minimum "clearing index" of 500 be reached before the burn will be permitted. The clearing index is a measurement of atmospheric conditions and upper wind currents, which indicate how well-ventilated the air is over the fire area. The clearing index tomorrow is expected to be more than 1000, allowing the smoke to rise significantly before dissipating. However, people with respiratory illness should take precautions to avoid exposure.

### About Prescribed Fire

A prescribed burn is a planned, carefully monitored fire where the burn processes, and contingency procedures are established in advance. Land managers have identified the precise conditions necessary to ensure the safety of the surrounding communities, proper smoke dispersal, and normal traffic conditions.

There will be opportunity for credentialed media to take photographs and video of the ignition operation and fire behavior. To arrange a tour, contact Jason Curry.

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